regard has been signed between India and Nepal;

(d) if so, the details of such joint ventures where Indian investment is likely to be made; and

(e) the reaction of Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) Yes, Sir. His Majesty's Government of Nepal have in recent months renewed their invitation to Indian entrepreneurs to make investments in Nepal.

(b) The invitation is not limited in terms of sectors, but MHGN have specifically identified certain priority sectors for this purpose, namely agro-based industry, tourism, hydro-power and other manufacturing industries (textile mills, readymade garments, leather products, writing and printing papers, newsprint, pharmaceuticals, sugar), as well as service sectors.

(c) No, Sir. Such investment does not require an inter-governmental agreement.

(d) It is not possible to specify joint ventures which Indian entrepreneurs might be interested to explore in Nepal.

(e) The Government's policy is to encourage and facilitate increased economic cooperation with Nepal, including investment in that country. research is the production of alcohol from sugarcane juice.

Zero trade deficit

1376. MAULANA OBAIDULLAH KHAN AZMI:
SHRI SANJAY DALMIA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item which appeared in the Economic Times dated February 26, 1995 captioned 'India may have zero trade deficit in 1997';

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto; and

(c) by when the country's trade deficit at zero point is likely to be achieved?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) No, Sir. No such news-item in the Economic Times dated February 26, 1995 has come to the notice of the Government. However, a similar news item which appeared in the Economic Times dated February 26, 1994 has come to the notice of the Government;

(b) and (c) Exports and imports depend on divergent sets of factors and an exact balance between the two can only be a coincidence. The Government is striving for a sustainable balance of trade. Given the comfortable foreign exchange reserves position, India's current trade deficit is within manageable limits.

Setting up of Industries in Nepal by Indian entrepreneurs

1377. SHRI SANJAY DALMIA:
DR. BAPU KALDATE:
MAULANA OBAIDULLAH KHAN AZMI:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Nepal has made an offer to the Indian extrepreneurs to set up industries in Nepal;

(b) if so, the sectors in which offer has been made;

(c) whether any agreement in this

Damage to Foodgrains in FCI Godowns

1378. DR. RANBIR SINGH: Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) whether foodgrains worth Rs. 100 crore have been rendered useless for human consumption over the last two years and the same cannot even be used for fodder purposes as has been brought